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To
Mr. Dragos Ciprian Pahonțu, General Manager Romsilva
By E-mail : office@rnp.rosilva.ro

Offer of collaboration

Project funded by DBU: “Virgin & Old Growth Forest in Romania – Safeguarding European Biodiversity Heritage”. Grant provided by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU) to support the mapping of virgin and old growth forest in Romania.

Dear Mr. Pahonțu,

Romania hosts a unique world natural heritage: the largest areas of primary forests in the EU. This natural treasure is of particular importance for preserving Europe's biodiversity, maintaining intact the water supply of Romania and carbon tanks. They are also a great potential for natural tourism to represent a chance for regional economic development. Primary forests have largely disappeared from almost all Member States of Europe, so that all intact areas of these ecosystems in Europe are of immense international importance.

We consider it as a wider European responsibility to support Romania's efforts protecting this natural heritage of intact old growth / primary forests.

We realise that “virgin forests” are under overall legal protection by the Romanian Forest Code. However, potential virgin and quasi-virgin forests must be identified, analyzed and processed in a substantiation study, with a view to proposing them to be included in the "National Catalog of Virgin and Quasi-Virgin Forests of Romania".

In order to enlarge the capacity to conduct these studies for populating the “Virgin Forest Catalogue” we decided to set up a project supporting the work of Romania forest experts.

The project is entitled “Old growth Forests in Romania. Safeguarding European Biodiversity Heritage” and it is financially supported by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU). DBU is funded by the German Government and has a long-time record supporting projects in Romania related to environmental and educational issues. The coordination of this project is with the reputable University of Rottenburg / Hochschule für Forstwirtschaft in Rottenburg (HFR) / Germany / State of Baden-Württemberg. This University has a close cooperation with Romanian scientists.

The project's main objective is to assist Romanian experts contributing to the implementation of Romania's legal objectives for protection of primary forests, such as: Forest Code, MO 3397 / 2012, MO 2525 / 2016. Sustainable management of forests and strict protection of forests with high conservation value represent the actual priorities that results from the national forest strategy,

the Forest Code and from the international regulations ratified by Romania. Also, European legal frameworks such as the Habitat Directive and the Biodiversity Strategy require decisive action to establish conservation measures and avoid further deterioration of natural habitats and habitats of protected species. Therefore we consider it as a European responsibility to support preservation of primary nature such as "virgin" and "cvasivirgin" forests.

The Ministry of Waters and Forests has invited all interested parties to collaborate / contribute and get involved in the process of identifying and elaborating of the background studies for protecting "virgin and cvasivirgin forests". In order to provide practical support with Romanian conservation programmes HFR / DBU established partnerships with Romanian forest experts, who will prepare studies about potential primary forest remains for the National Catalogue of Virgin Forests.

Those experts will assess potential primary forest stands in accordance with the Romanian legal requirements. The work was launched in June 2017. The project will cover development of studies and submission to authorities and the Ministry for Water and Forests in 2017 and 2018.

Romsilva is committed to sustainable forest management and nature protection. A large share of potential "virgin" forests is located on property of the Romanian State and administered by Romsilva. To further the implementation of Romania's forest protection programmes and laws as well as to assist with your efforts to identify and map "virgin and cvasivirgin" forests we would like to offer collaboration.

We hope that you accept our invitation.

We propose to establish a signed "Declaration of Collaboration" to allow our Romanian partners, as DBU experts, to access both forest data and field analysis of potential virgin or quasi-virgin forests. This document should be made available to forestry directors so that local forest managers are aware when they are asked to collaborate with our experts.

The collaboration we offer to Romsilva is free of any fees, all expenses of the project's expert partners are covered by DBU.

This "Declaration of Collaboration" would considerably improve the progress of the DBU project, funded by the German government, particularly if all Romsilva forest district managers would be officially informed about this. Our expert partners are equipped with documents confirming them being part of that project.

We are happy to provide any further information about the project and to advance the dialogue about the details of collaboration.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Dr. Rainer Luick



Matthias Schickhofer
(Project Coordination)